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THE SINAITIC INSCRIPTIONS.

HUGH BARCLAY, LL.D.

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THE SINAITIC INSCRIPTIONS:

A BRIEF INQUIRY

INTO

THE EVIDENCES

OF THEIR HEBREW ORIGIN.

RE-PRINTED FROM "THE ORIGINAL SECESSION MAGAZINE."



HUGH BARCLAY, LL.D.,

SHERIFF-SUBSTITUTE OF PERTHSHIRE, AT PERTH.

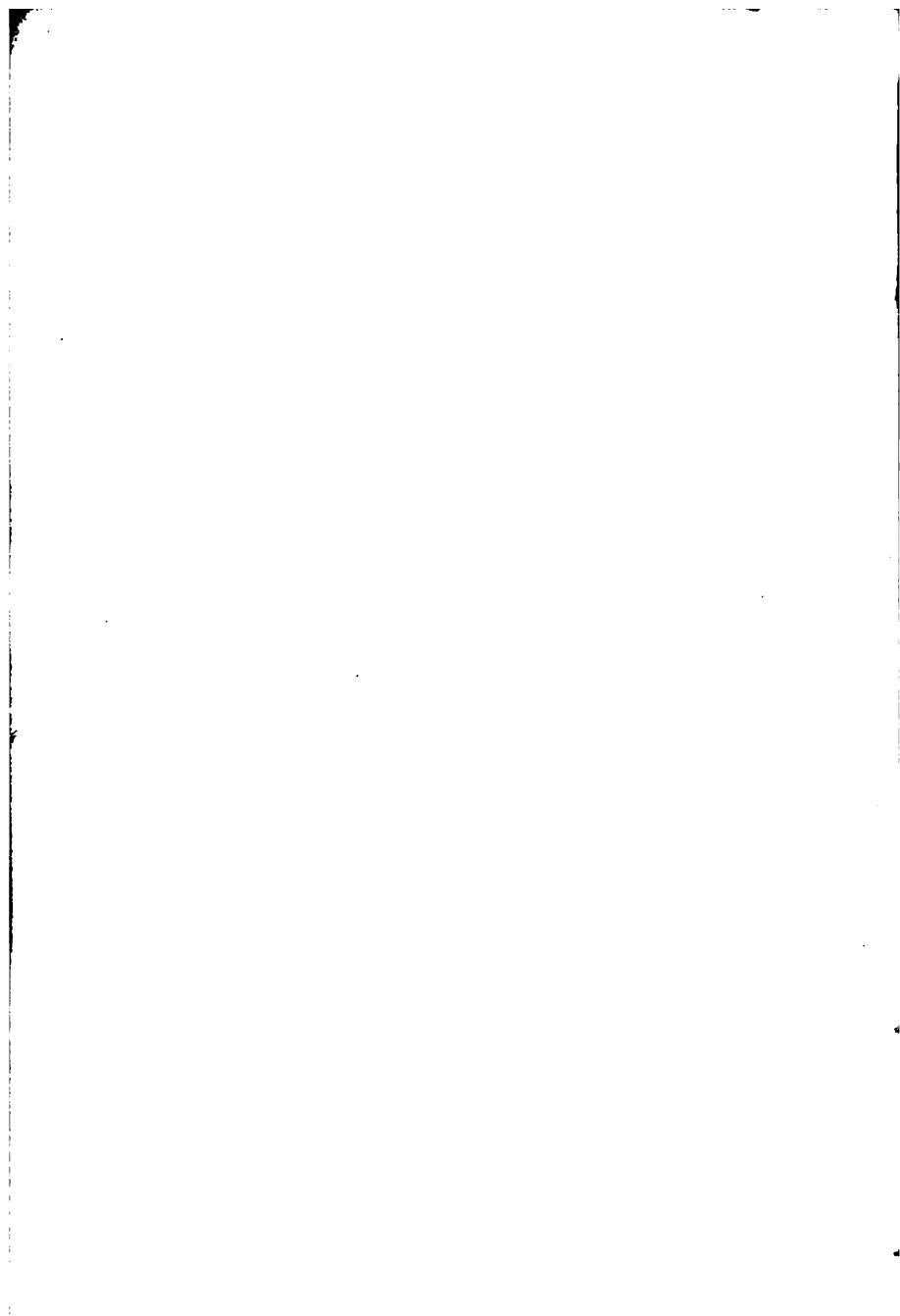
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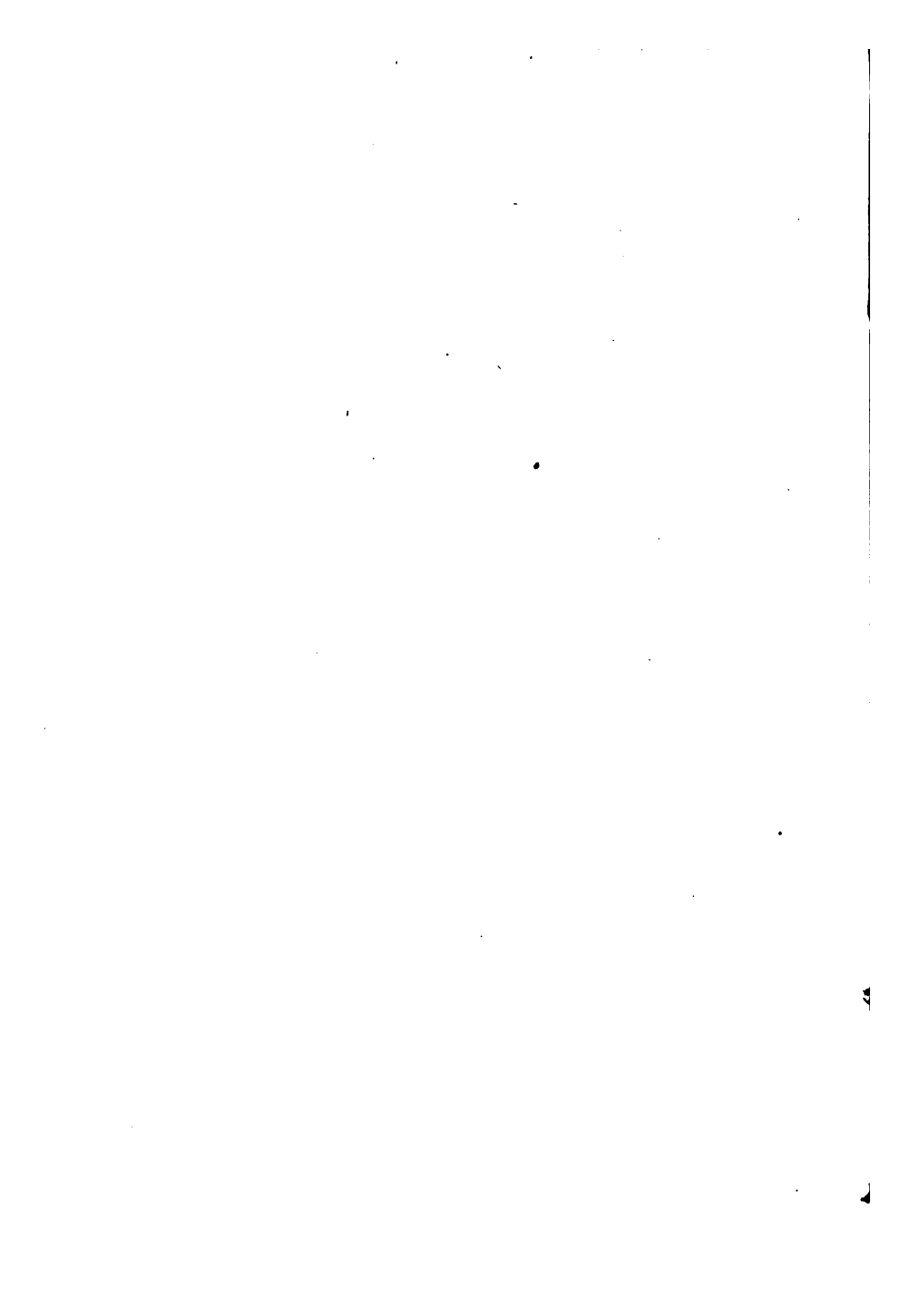
TO
THE REV. CHARLES FORSTER, B.D.,
SIX-PREACHER OF CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL,
RECTOR OF STISTED, ESSEX,

These Pages

ARE, BY PERMISSION,
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
AS A SMALL TRIBUTE TO HIS MERITORIOUS LABOURS
ON THE SUBJECT OF OLD TESTAMENT MEMORIALS,

BY

THE AUTHOR.



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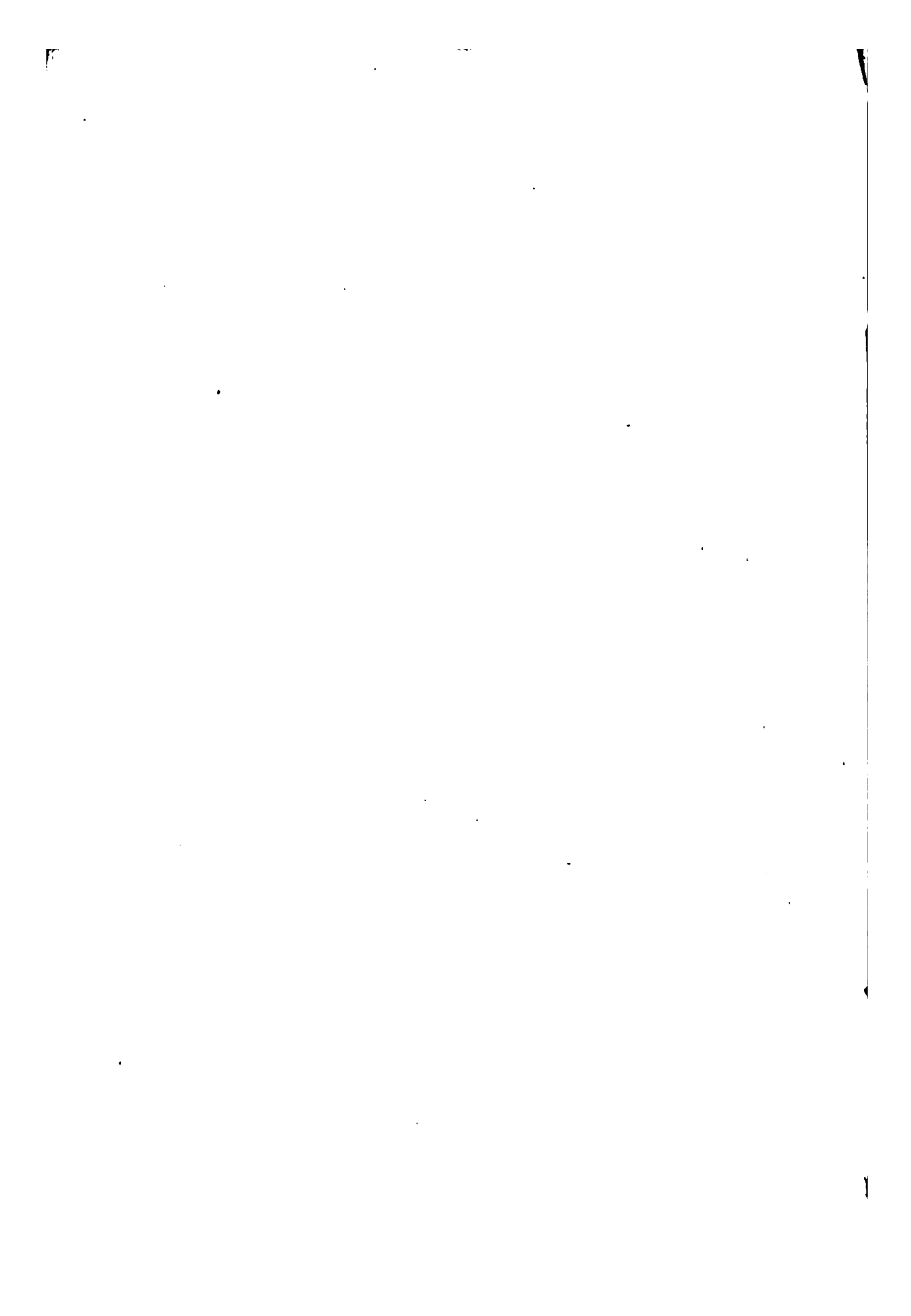
THE author having enjoyed the perusal of the several interesting publications of Mr Forster, became convinced of the Hebrew origin of the Sinaitic Inscriptions. He regretted the absence of any popular exposition of the evidences; and therefore, amidst the onerous duties of his office, he contributed three articles on the subject to the "Original Secession Magazine." These he has been induced to give in this more permanent form. Any repetition or want of connection must be accounted for by the disjointed form in which the subject was necessarily first treated by him.

PERTH, 9th Nov., 1866.

"The historical matters of Scripture, both narrative and prophecy, constitute, as it were, the bones of its system; whereas the spiritual matters are as its muscles, blood-vessels, and nerves. As the bones are necessary to the human system, so Scripture must have its historical matters."—*Bengel*.

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The Sinaitic Inscriptions.

PART FIRST.

THEIR HISTORY.

WE live in eventful times. The wise man has written, "The thing that hath been is that which shall be, and there is no new thing under the sun." But allowing much for the engrossing power of the present over the past, the student of history cannot conceal from himself that at this epoch wondrous events are congregated. The sixteenth century alone stands forth in characteristics somewhat similar to that which is now current. The monk who then found the neglected Book of God in his monastery, was chiefly, under the Divine blessing, the instrument of wakening mankind from their long slumber, and dispelling the darkness of ages. The invention of the printing press was coeval, and disseminated the glorious lessons of *The Book*. The field of man's energies was

extended by the discovery of a new world. The mariner's compass came opportunely to guide the navigator through the trackless ocean. When mind had burst its sepulchre, men of powerful genius arose in rapid succession, carrying onward the march of discovery and truth. But great as were the triumphs of the sixteenth century, these have been surpassed by the triumphs and trophies of mind in the first half of the nineteenth century. Men of gigantic intellect and indomitable perseverance were reckoned no longer by units but by hundreds; nor have they been confined to any favoured land, but have arisen simultaneously in every clime.

One peculiarity is observable in the history of discovery. Mankind often seem standing on the very verge of some long-hidden truth, and yet turning away from its complete development, as if the period of its revelation had not yet come in the councils of Heaven, till "the fulness of time." There appear to be certain favoured epochs when the descending angel visits the stagnant mental pool and troubles its waters. It is then that men of gigantic mind arise and plunge the social body into the healing wave, on the very margin of which it had for ages lain, as if helplessly and hopelessly paralytic. The power of steam was

known to the ancient Greeks, but its application to the manifold purposes to which it is now applied is of very recent date. It struggled through many stages until Newcomen, Worcester, Savory, and finally James Watt, gave direction and practical application to the force in many varied forms. The mariner's compass, it is said, was not unknown to the Chinese, ages before Flavio Gayo made his discovery at Amalphi. Sir Humphrey Davy, in the beginning of the present century, published an account of the art of depicting figures on nitrate of silver by the action of light, but it was not until half-a-century thereafter that Daguerre gave notoriety and his name to its application to practical science. Bishop Watson of Llandaff, in the last century, and an anonymous writer in the *Scots Magazine* of 1756, gave minute details of the electric telegraph, but another century ran its course before the straight lines of railway supplied a fitting field for its operation.

More to the purpose of our present theme, the Bible, with whose pages Protestants were familiar from their youth, recorded the rise and progress, the decline and fall, of mighty empires and vast cities. The enemies of our most holy faith were often raising flimsy objections, and detect-

ing, as they vainly thought, contradictions in holy writ, while the Christian community sat supine—ignorant of the vast stores of elucidation within their reach. It was long known that there existed extensive mounds in the localities of Scripture history, as well as huge piles of masonry in eastern deserts, covered with scrolls of hieroglyphics which no one cared to copy, far less to decipher. Within recent years, these vast store-houses, containing the archives and relics of extinct nationalities, have been explored. Nineveh, and other ancient cities, have been exhumed from their long-hid sepulchres, and year after year new proofs are exhibited of the exact truth of the Divine record in its minutest details. Similar results have followed such explorations in the lands of Assyria, Egypt, and Ethiopia, some of which memorials are of a date even anterior to the time of Moses. In the words of Dr Eadie—"The valley of the Nile has now uncovered its hieroglyphics to confirm and illustrate the claims of the Bible; and Nineveh, out of the wreck and rubbish of three thousand years, has at length yielded up its ruins to prove and glorify the Hebrew oracles."

We shall shortly see that the remarkable fact of the long abeyance of research and its recent renewal, is nowhere more wonderfully illustrated

than in the case of the inscriptions on the rocks of Sinai.

Even before the birth of Christ some allusions were made by writers as to the existence of inscriptions on the rocks of Syria. In particular, Diodorus, who wrote about ten years before the Christian era, mentions a sacred palm-grove on the south-west shore of the Sinaitic peninsula, where "there is an altar of solid stone, *very old, inscribed with ancient unknown letters.*" Strabo notices the same fact. Dean Stanley, though strongly opposed to the Hebrew origin of the Sinaitic inscriptions, justly and candidly observes, with reference to this fact, "it is important as a record of inscriptions already old and unknown at that date."

About the year 518 of the Christian era, there lived one Cosmas of Alexandria, an enterprising merchant, who had so often visited India as to acquire the cognomen of *Indicopleustes*. He visited on foot the peninsula of Sinai, and made known the fact that the rocks throughout that vast wilderness were covered with inscriptions and hieroglyphics in an unknown character. But he mentions that some Jews, who were of his company, seemed able to interpret these writings, and on their authority he ascribed them to the Israel-

ites who, under Moses, tabernacled for forty years in that region. Dr Robinson bears the following testimony in favour of Cosmas:—"He seems to relate what he himself had observed in his travels, or what he learned from others, with great simplicity and regard to truth." Cosmas reported what has been corroborated by later explorers, that the great antiquity of these inscriptions, even in his time, was established by the fact that several stones had fallen from their position, and the inscriptions were found reversed in some of the stones on the ground, which, when united with the mass above, were found to correspond exactly, both in the configuration of the rock and in the inscription. John Lewis Burckhardt describes the same state of things when the locality was visited by him at a greatly later period. "The inscriptions are on the surface of blocks which have fallen from the cliff, and some of them appear to have been engraved whilst the pieces still formed part of the main rock." (*Syria*, p. 477.) This proves that the inscriptions had been made before the rocks had been disunited by the tear and wear of ages. Mr Grey subsequently found that the action of an occasional torrent had worn away no less than fourteen feet from the lower surface of a rock, and that evidently since the inscriptions

were made thereon. (*Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature*, Vol. II., p. 147.) Some of the inscriptions on the fallen stones were not thus inverted, showing that, whilst some had slipped down, others had rolled over in their descent. The characters of the inscriptions are the same in all, and the gradual action of water on the inscribed stones, even in the early age of Cosmas, showed their great antiquity. Such a fact and such a scene were well described by Job—

“The mountain falling cometh to nought,
The rock is removed out of its place,
The waters wear the stones.”

Cosmas has left a witness for himself on these rocks. There have been discovered among the inscriptions, but in a totally different character, and in imperfect Greek, several lines, one of which, published by Pococke, has been thus translated—“*Remember Cosmas, the voyager to Thibet;*” another, as given by Mr Grey, runs thus—“*Remember Cosmas and the Resurrection.*” Cosmas, after becoming a monk at Alexandria, gave to the world, in 535, the details of his observations in his work, written in Greek, entitled, *Christian Topography*. Cosmas thus emphatically describes the scene—“One sees in that wilderness of Mount Sinai all the rocks (even those broken off from the

cliffs) at all the resting-places, written over with sculptured Hebrew characters, as I myself, who have traversed these localities, do testify. Which inscriptions certain Jews of our caravan, having read, interpreted to us. In fact, the Israelites so exuberated in writing, that all these localities are filled with engraved Hebrew characters, preserved even until now for the sake, as I think, of the unbelievers, that it is open to all who visit these localities, to see for themselves, or to inquire and inform themselves on the matter, so as to ascertain whether we do not speak the truth." The Christian world in the age of Justinian had neither time nor taste for the prosecution of such inquiries. It is remarkable, that, from the sixth until the eighteenth, nay, it might be more truthfully said until the nineteenth, century, no further attempt was made to decipher the characters and discover the import of these records. Silently in the wilderness did these stones tell the story of God's wondrous dealings with His people of old. But His Church, Gallo-like, "cared for none of these things," and alike disregarded their legends and disdained their lessons. Now that the Books of Moses are treated as myths, it seems as if "the very stones cry out" against such impiety.

In 1554, Peter Belon or Bellonius, a Parisian

physician, visited Arabia, and published a volume in which he mentions these inscriptions. Another century ran its course, and, in 1652, Athanasius Kircher, a German antiquary, took notice of these inscriptions in a work then published. In 1665, Balthaser Monconys, a Frenchman, visited Arabia and published his observations on the same subject. An interval of a century again elapsed without any further notice of these interesting memorials of ancient times. In 1706, the celebrated author Montfaucon, republished the geographical treatise of Cosmas, in which was recorded the existence of these inscriptions, and their supposed Hebrew origin. Here the remarkable fact may be noticed, that, of the numerous works of Cosmas, this one volume only has been thus preserved. All besides have been lost. God in His ever-wonderful providence has preserved this one volume, as it were, to be a guide, in the fulness of time, to lead the Christian inquirer to a new section in the vast magazine of Scriptural evidences. Montfaucon made no inquiries as to the truth of the facts recorded by the Egyptian traveller, but accepted them on his undoubted credit, which had never been impeached. But, admitting the existence of the inscriptions at the time of Cosmas, with the true spirit of scepticism,

he disputed their antiquity as at the period of the Exodus, and, as might be expected, without inquiry, denied their connection with Jewish or sacred history.

In 1722 the Prefetto of the Franciscans at Cairo visited the locality and reported, "that these inscriptions had been cut into the hard rock with the greatest industry," and "contained some very secret mysteries engraved either by the Chaldeans or some other parties *long before the coming of Christ.*"

Dr Robert Clayton, Bishop of Clogher, in 1753 published a translation of the manuscript itinerary of the journey before-mentioned from Cairo to Mount Sinai, by the Prefetto of Egypt. He at the same time munificently offered £500 to the person who would copy and bring to Europe the inscriptions on the rocks of the Wady Mokatteb or written valley. The learned Bishop gave it as his opinion that these inscriptions were in the ancient Hebrew character, which the Israelites learned at the time of giving the law, and subsequently preserved on the mountain range during their forty years' pilgrimage in the wilderness. The Bishop has this very sensible observation, which never was more in season than at the present time: "The Books of Moses, with regard to early

antiquity, are a light that shineth in a dark place, and indeed wonderful is the light which darts from them whenever the inquirer carries it in his searches into the early ages of the world. Besides, as the truth of the Christian religion depends upon the veracity of the Jewish history as delivered by Moses, anything which may serve to corroborate or enlighten that history must be of service to the Christian revelation."—*Journal from Grand Cairo to Mount Sinai, edited by Robert, Lord Bishop of Clogher.* London, 1753.

Dr Richard Pococke, afterwards Bishop of Osory, was the first European who visited the east with the view of examining these hoary records. He published, in 1737, a few of the inscriptions. Some others appeared in No. 56 of the Transactions of the Royal Society, in a paper from the pen of Edward Wortley Montague. A few more were added by the celebrated traveller, Niebuhr. This eminent man was instructed by the King of Denmark to visit and report on the inscriptions in the Wady Mokatteb, but, unfortunately for the cause of scientific and accurate research, his guides conducted him to some other districts, where some similar inscriptions were traced by him. He remarked, however, that they had been noticed by a Greek author in the third century, but he does

not state his authority for this, and it has not been found. It is probable, therefore, that he meant Cosmas. Niebuhr conjectured the inscriptions to have been the handiwork of Phœnicians.

Charles Thomson visited the valley and took notice of these inscriptions in his two volumes of travels published in 1744.

In 1773 Court Gebelin noticed the inscriptions on the Sinaitic rocks.

In 1776, Edward Wortley Montague, in the "Philosophical Transactions," gave an account of the inscriptions, and ascribed them to Greek pilgrims from Constantinople, and this merely because of a few Greek words prominent among the multitude.

In 1779 Le Comte d'Antraigues travelled in the Sinaitic peninsula, and certain artists in his suite took several fac-similes of inscriptions, which were published in 1811 in the posthumous letters of Von Müller, the historian of Switzerland. Müller was inclined to adopt the Israelitish origin of these inscriptions.

Volney in 1783 visited the locality, and, as might be expected, ridiculed the whole inscriptions as consisting, according to him, only of clumsy figures of asses and camels, which he attributed to Greek pilgrims. It will be after-

wards shown how far from the truth this writer was in this general description of these inscriptions.

In the early part of the present century several copies were taken of these inscriptions by different travellers, with more or less accuracy. No full collection was, however, published until 1830, when the Rev. G. F. Grey published a collection of 177 of these inscriptions in Vol. II., Part 1, of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature. These were all taken by himself and his companions with great care, but with much difficulty. It was found impossible to prevail on the Arab guides to rest whilst was accomplished what to them appeared the foolish process of reading the rocks. To overcome this obstacle, Mr Grey and his friends had recourse to the stratagem of unloosing the camels during night, and whilst the guides were in search of the fugitives the inscriptions were diligently recorded.

Dr Robinson, in his *Biblical Researches*, thus records his observations:—"The rocks on both sides of this valley presented everywhere surfaces so well adapted for inscriptions, that, leaving my companions to follow down the right side, I struck across to the left. There, on a large rock, I found four short inscriptions in the usual unknown char-

acter. But beside our tent was also a huge detached rock covered with similar inscriptions, much obliterated. As we proceeded down the valley, the rocks on the right presented several inscriptions in the same unknown writing. Indeed, we found them at almost every point where the overhanging or projecting rocks seemed to indicate a convenient resting-place."

So soon as the attention of the Christian world was aroused to this new and astonishing mass of historical evidence, the enemies of our most holy faith, as might be expected, entered the field to contest the point. The Rationalistic and Neological schools of Germany, which have ever treated the Pentateuch or Books of Moses as myths, allegories, or fables, united in declaring these inscriptions to be of comparatively modern date—the work of Christian pilgrims in the third and fourth centuries. Burckhardt was the first who gave currency to this theory, ascribing the inscriptions to pilgrims from Egypt. (*Syria*, p. 609.) The chief of his followers was the late Professor Beer of Leipsic, the friend and fellow-labourer of Gesenius. In 1840 the Professor published, in his *Studia Asiatica*, a collection of one hundred of these inscriptions, selected from eleven different sources, under the title of "A Century of Sinaitic Inscrip-

tions." He thereon constructed an alphabet, which he assigned to the Nabathœns, and maintained it to be earlier than the Arabic. He was pleased to assign the date of these inscriptions at a century or a century and a-half before the time of Cosmas. How fortunate, rather how Providential, the work of Cosmas, which necessarily compels the opponents of the Israelitish authorship of these inscriptions to assign a date at least anterior to the age of Cosmas. Unless for the remarkable preservation of his book, these authorities might have easily assigned a much more modern date to them. Dr Beer adopted the theory of Volney, ascribing these inscriptions to early Christian pilgrims from Arabia Petrea, from amongst the people known as Nabathœns. The capital of their kingdom was Petra, whose rocky remains have so long excited the attention of the learned. The opinion of the eminent Professor has been adopted by many—and, it must be admitted, by some men of distinguished character and talent, and by none more deserving of deference than Dean Stanley and Chevalier Bunsen.

Baron Lepsius, while supporting Professor Beer in assigning a more modern date to the inscriptions, disagrees with him as to their being the workmanship of Christian pilgrims, and assigns

them to some pastoral people inhabiting these valleys in the first centuries before and after the birth of Christ.

In 1845 the Rev. T. Brockman with difficulty took several copies of inscriptions from the Wady Mokatteb. In the *Archives des Missions Scientifiques* for January, 1851, a report is published from the journal of M. Lottin-de-Laval, in which he minutely describes the inscriptions, and the great difficulty experienced in reaching some of them without ladders. In 1856, the moulded casts of Laval, containing 330 fac-similes of inscriptions, were published, under the patronage of the Imperial Government of France.

Dr Stewart, the amiable and devoted Protestant pastor of Leghorn, and formerly minister of the parish of Erskine, on the Clyde, briefly notices these inscriptions. His highly interesting volume, *The Tent and the Khan*, is replete with other, and to him more congenial topics. We are not inclined to place great reliance on a writer, however learned, who with reference to these rocky legends puts such questions, but waits no answer—“Whence came they? What age beheld this most novel specimen of penmanship? Curious and interesting questions, but scarcely to be discussed when hungry and weary after a long day’s jour-

ney." Dr Stewart, however, gives an opinion differing from those who assign a modern or Christian authorship to these inscriptions. He rejects the Hebrew origin, and assigns them to the Amalekites who dwelt in the land at the time the tribes of Israel went up to possess their country. When we come to examine the proofs, this and similar theories will be found untenable. We deeply regret the following passage in the volume of Dr Stewart—"Related by marriage to the Rev. Charles Forster, who professes, in his *Voice of Israel from the Rocks of Sinai*, to have discovered a key to the Hamyaritic inscriptions of the Wadi Mokatteb, Captain Butler has adopted very naturally the views of his relative, and was resolved to search the desert for an inscription of twenty lines in the Sinaitic character mentioned in that work as having been seen by an Arab merchant in one of his journeys upwards of 1,300 years ago, *but never stumbled on by any one since.*" Obviously at this time Dr Stewart could not have read Mr Forster's volumes; and we feel assured that the amiable pastor of Leghorn, if he now direct his acute mind to the evidence since accumulated, will not thus charge with credulity and prejudice the gallant Butler, brother of the hero of Silistria, and who himself fell in the battle

of Inkerman. Dr Stewart has, nevertheless, rendered great service to the cause of the Israelitish origin of the inscriptions by his interesting discovery of the sepulchres or burying-places of the tribes, and he records that "the granite rocks of Mount Serbal are covered with inscriptions." (P. 135.)

Dr Bonnar of Kelso, in his valuable work *On the Desert of Sinai*, discusses the subject with great candour. He sets aside the assumption of Dr Beer and others of the same class, and concludes thus—"The Jewish theory is the likeliest and the simplest, and I say this all the more decidedly because I do not think that it is borne out by actual evidence." He adds—"Perhaps it may turn out that Niebuhr's hint about the Phœnicians may after all be the real key to the puzzle."

The Rev. John Anderson, of Helensburgh, in his *Wanderings in the Land of Israel*, published in 1856, decidedly supports the Jewish origin of these inscriptions.

The fullest account of these wonderful inscriptions is to be found in the first of the three volumes published in 1852 by the Rev. Charles Forster, rector of Stisted, Essex, entitled, *The One Primeval Language*. The reverend gentleman had previously, in 1844, greatly distinguished

himself in this walk in a work which treated *Of the Historical Geography of Arabia*, in which he described the discovery and deciphering of the great ten-line Hamyaritic inscription on the rock of Hisn Ghorab, on the coast of Southern Arabia. This discovery has been confirmed by many recent travellers, and has in no small degree thrown light on the similar inscriptions in the region of Sinai. The more immediate subject of Forster's treatise is *The One Primeval Language, or The Voice of Israel from the Rocks of Sinai*. On this latter work he states, in his preface, that he had been occupied for seven years. This learned author, in the three volumes, enters fully and minutely into a critical examination of the various inscriptions. He compares their character with ancient inscriptions in Egypt and other lands of the Bible. His rules of interpretation are twofold. *First*, That in comparing known with unknown ancient alphabets, letters of the same known *form* must be assumed to have the same *power*. *Second*, That the old Arabic being assumed the primeval language, and as this consists mostly of trilateral roots, the principle of biliteral or trilateral roots should always be acted on in subdividing into words the undivided inscriptions. The successful application of these rules, in translating these and

other ancient inscriptions, is exhibited in every page of Mr Forster's three volumes.

In 1854, Dean Stanley published his highly-interesting volume, *Sinai and Palestine*, which has deservedly and rapidly run through several editions. The learned writer states, contrary to previous travellers, that the number of the inscriptions has been greatly exaggerated, and that instead of being reckoned by thousands they could only be numbered by hundreds or fifties. He very summarily sets aside their Hebrew origin, and ascribes them "for the most part to Christians, whether travellers or pilgrims." He records his opinion that, "there were none of the inscriptions that could not have been written by one man climbing on another's shoulders." The criticisms of the Dean were met by a volume from Mr Forster in 1856, dedicated to Lord Lyndhurst, who took a deep interest in the inquiry, and, it is known, expressed strong convictions in favour of the position upheld by this learned author.

In 1862, Mr Forster published, by subscription, a large and valuable collection of the inscriptions, taken by photography, under the title of *Sinai Photographed*, with an appendix containing much additional evidence in support of the Israelitish origin of these rocky records. This work was

undertaken, in 1854, on the suggestion of Lord Lyndhurst and Lord Harrowby. The materials were obtained by Captain Henry Thomas Butler and his brother, the Rev. Pierce Butler. From these results of their united labours, and those published in 1856 by M. Lottin-de-Laval, the photographs and glyphographs in this volume were taken.

The interesting account of the inscription on the rock of Hisn Ghorab is given as an appendix to this volume. This inscription is strongly corroborative of the antiquity and Jewish origin of the Sinaitic inscriptions. In the seventh century an inscription was discovered by the Viceroy of the Caliph Moawiyeh in Hadramaut, and preserved in Arabic, by Al-Kazwini, in the shape of a poem. A great amount of evidence has now established the identity of this ancient poem with an inscription at Hisn Ghorab, on the southern coast of Arabia, 210 miles east of Aden. The poem has traditionally formed one of the native songs. This inscription is described as executed with great taste, in a white portion of a black-coloured rock. It is regarded as a monument of the lost tribe of Ad, which Arab tradition states to have been destroyed by Divine judgment in the age of Joseph. The Adites are supposed to have been

the sons of Ad, or Aram, the fourth generation from Noah by Shem. *Aden* still, in its name, bears witness to the ancient race. The tribe of Ad, the people of Aram, are noticed in the Koran. There are numerous inscriptions on the rocks in this district. In the ruins of Mareb there are several which record the Fall, as well as the Flood and the preservation of Noah. The poem of Al-Kazwini, and the recently-discovered inscription, agree with reference to seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine, and the consequent suffering of the inhabitants. A tablet found in a sepulchre in Yemen corroborates the same fact, and narrates the sending to Joseph messengers "with a measure of silver to bring back a measure of flour," and failing in this, a measure of gold and then of pearls were successively but vainly tried to procure food to a perishing people.

In 1865, Mr Forster published a summary of the whole evidence which had been collected by various inquirers, and ably met the various objections which had been taken against the ascription of these inscriptions to the Hebrews. This volume is entitled *Israel in the Wilderness*, and is replete with scholarly argument.

As to the locality of these inscriptions, accord-

ing to Dr Beer they are to be found in the valleys and hill-sides which branch out from Sinai towards the north-west, extending to the eastern shore of the Gulf of Suez. There are several on Mount Serbal (supposed by Dr Stewart and many others to be the veritable Mount Sinai), and a very few are found in some valleys to the south of Sinai. The chief repository of these ancient records is a valley on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Suez, from six to seven miles in length. The multitude of inscriptions in this valley is so great, that for ages it has been known by the name of, "Wady Mokatteb," or the written valley. Adjoining the valley is the hill Djebel Mokatteb, or the written mountain. The word Mokatteb, both in Hebrew and Arabic, answers to "*written*." The nature of the stone in this valley is peculiarly adapted, according to all travellers, for receiving and preserving the characters inscribed thereon. It is red sandstone; which, from its softness, is easily cut, and yet, from its not peeling or scaling, retains the inscriptions entire. The action of the atmosphere and the heat imparts to the surface a hard and dark crust. Mr Pierce Butler remarked—"The granite rocks are largely interspersed with rocks of trap stone—a species of stone, black on the surface, but lemon-coloured inside. Now this

peculiar material had been studiously selected by the Sinaitic engravers as the receptacle for their inscriptions; and the consequence was, that the inscriptions carved on this material came out with the effect of a rubricated book or an illuminated manuscript—the black surface throwing out in relief the lemon-coloured inscriptions.” The inscriptions made on granite in Egypt have become obliterated, but those on the red sandstone of the quarries of Masara, of an age before that of Moses, still appear as if freshly cut. There are inscriptions on the rocks of Dhaub, Girnar, and Kapendigi, in Hindostan, ascribed to the famous King Asoca, several centuries before the Christian era, and which have been recently deciphered by Norris, Wilson, and Burney. Similar inscriptions are found on the stones of Ipsambul, Elephantine, Philæ, Masara, and Thebes, the great antiquity of which is admitted on all hands. Indeed, remarkable discoveries have recently been made of ancient engravings, not only on monumental stones, but even on the rocks and caverns of our own country, which undoubtedly are of great antiquity, and, like those of Sinai, have not until now attracted any public notice.

Dr Beer notices the fact of the red sandstone

forming so ready a tablet for passing pilgrims recording their names and memorials, but he is forgetful that similar inscriptions are also found high up on Mount Serbal, almost inaccessible, and on stone of flinty hardness.

Dr Robinson remarks—"Not the least singularity about these monuments, is the wonderful preservation of the inscriptions upon this soft sandstone, exposed as they have been to the air and weather during the lapse of so many ages. On some of the stones they are quite perfect, on others both the inscription and the stone itself have been worn away deeply by the tooth of time."—(*Bib. Res.*, i., 114, 115.)

Dr Bonar thus remarks—"Scratch your name with your penknife upon the sandstone of Wady Mokatteb, and it will remain for centuries as perfect as on the day you scratched it." The inscriptions on the granite of Mount Serbal, which are believed to have been engraved in the same age as those on the red sandstone of the valley, are, according to Burckhardt and other travellers, now scarcely legible.

That such inscriptions were wont to be made in ancient times, is well illustrated by a passage from the Book of Job—

“ Oh that my words were now written !
Oh that they were printed in a book !
That they were graven with an iron pen
And lead in the rock for ever ! ”—(Chap. xix. 23, 24.)

The Sinaitic inscriptions are not merely formed of letters, but they are largely intermingled with hieroglyphics—chiefly the pictures of animals, such as camels in varied positions, goats, lizards, serpents, conies, mules, dogs, ostriches, tortoises; also men in many diverse attitudes, and engaged in the usual occupations of ancient and pastoral times. Dr Stewart mentions the numerous rude designs of men with swords, camels, donkeys, and gazelles or ibexes. Dr Bonar bears testimony that the engravings of Pococke and Forster are, generally speaking, faithful, but adds, “They convey too high an idea of the inscriptions, not perfectly representing their rudeness and irregularity. They are not indistinct scratches by any means, but they are not such deep and noble chisellings as some of Forster’s engravings make them appear.” Many of these delineations are admitted by all who have viewed them, even by Dr Beer and his followers, to have been sketched in the rudest manner, often being the mere outline or sketch of the object sought to be represented, so as to require considerable force of imagination to impart

to it flesh and blood, "a local habitation and a name."

The hieroglyphics are essential to the full interpretation of the inscriptions. In the words of Professor Beer—"The truth is, that the original writers sometimes employed images as parts of letters, and, *vice versa*, images for groups of letters." Laborde remarks—"These inscriptions come out clearly on the red ground of the rock, and the irregularity of the lines betrays the unskilfulness of the persons who confided their story to the custody of these rocks." (*Journey to Mount Sinai*, p. 262.) Mr Forster adopts the canon of Professor Beer, that hieroglyphic characters are used in the Sinaitic inscriptions; but he adds, that the acknowledged hieroglyphics of Egypt elucidate those of Sinai.

PART SECOND.

THE EVIDENCES.

WE now proceed to detail the proofs *affirmative* of these inscriptions being the workmanship of the tribes of Israel, and *negative* of their being the performance of Christian pilgrims, or of any others but the Hebrews. Some of the evidences are of the nature of extrinsic or external, others belong to the class of intrinsic or internal.

Firstly, It is admitted by all who have treated on the subject, that the mass of the inscriptions (with very few modern exceptions, easily detected) are the produce of one age or generation.

This important fact is proved by the identity of character, style, and appearance of the whole series of inscriptions, which is candidly admitted by Dr Beer (*Intro.*, p. 15). It is proved, beyond all cavil, that the sojourn of the Israelites in the wilderness was forty years. This period was sufficient, and nothing more than sufficient, for the execution of the work. On the other hand, if they were the workmanship of successive bands

of passing pilgrims, it would be reasonable to expect that they would have been found much more rare, scattered, and executed in divers styles, just as suited the numbers, the time, the taste, and circumstances of each company of itinerants. There exists no record, tradition, or presumption that, during any one age or generation within the Christian era, there did or could exist such a vast succession of Christian pilgrims—not, let it be observed, to the cradle of the Gospel at Bethlehem, or to the sepulchre of its Divine Founder at Jerusalem, as was the case with the crusaders of subsequent ages—but to the Mount of Ordinances, the enthronement of the Law, and to the forbidding wilderness of Sinai. It would be, indeed, passing belief that so great an enchantment should for an age have spell-bound the Christian mind, and moved mankind in one great mass towards the East, but have left neither record nor tradition behind, and never have caused any subsequent movement of similar kind. Dr Beer himself is forced to admit the improbability of Christian pilgrims visiting the valleys of Sinai. He thus expresses himself—"About this period (the fourth century) the custom among Christians of making pilgrimages to the sacred localities, principally to Jerusalem, in expectation of seeing

miracles, and from religious motives, was greatly on the increase"—"that Mount Sinai should have been visited at that period by the inhabitants of Palestine or Syria is indeed scarcely credible; certainly we have no proof whatever of their doing so." "But it may very well have *chanced* that this appetite for *visiting* the sacred localities may have kindled in *some* tribes of Arabia Petrea a like *desire* of *frequenting*, from pious motives, *for a time*, Mount Sinai and the valleys which witnessed the great miracles of Moses." It will be seen how cautiously and even doubtfully Dr Beer ventures to attribute the inscriptions to other than Hebrew origin.

Secondly, The inscriptions are found all through the valleys of the peninsula north-west of Mount Sinai. They become rarer on the opposite side, until rocks equally and better fitted for receiving such inscriptions are found without the slightest trace of any such; and it is proved that the rocks so plentifully inscribed are on the exact path of the Israelites.

Dr Beer admits that the great mass of the inscriptions are on the Egyptian side of the peninsula, which is the very opposite of that which would be trod by Christian pilgrims from Palestine. On the route such pilgrims would have taken,

few, if any, traces of inscriptions are found. To avoid this last difficulty, Dr Beer supposes the existence of a body of Christian or Nabathœan pilgrims from Petra, but whose existence is unknown to history or tradition. A Nabathœan inscription has been recovered from Petra; and although it is of an alphabet similar to those of Sinai, its letters are differently formed, and with much greater regularity, or, to use the words of Captain Fraser, "there is always a certain difference observable." The only exceptions to the non-appearance of inscriptions on the south and east of Mount Sinai are some to be found on the road from Hor to Ezion Geber; but this fact is rather corroborative of the evidence, seeing that this was the only outlet for the tribes of Israel in their departure from the wilderness of their lengthy sojourn.

Thirdly, The vast number and high position of the inscriptions show them to have been the work of much time and labour.

It is worthy of remark, that they are generally found on the shady side of the valley, and where the rocks are almost perpendicular and least accessible. Dean Stanley certainly contradicts both the multiplicity and altitude of these inscriptions, saying, "the inscriptions straggle, not by thou-

sands, but at most by hundreds or fifties." In this the distinguished author is contradicted by Dr Lepsius, who narrates, "we next came to the Wadi Mokatteb, 'the valley with inscriptions,' which derives its name from the *immense numbers* of inscriptions which are to be found in several places." Again—"I went up Wadi Aleyat, passing *innumerable* rock inscriptions." Lord Lindsay says, "they are counted *by thousands*." The Comte d'Antraigues states that it would take six months' hard labour to copy those which he had seen; and the Rev. Pierce Butler states, "*that every second stone was inscribed*." Such an extent of work could only be accomplished by the united labour of a multitude of people sojourning in the locality for a long time, and they could only have reached certain portions of the rocks so inscribed by means of ladders or scaffolding from beneath, or by the aid of ropes and baskets from above. This fact is established by the great difficulty and danger which have been experienced in merely copying these inscriptions. The amount of labour in inscribing, and the possession of the necessary tools and apparatus for its performance, by passing pilgrims, whose end and object must always have been to reach beyond, and that with urgent haste, offer difficulties undoubtedly beyond the limits of

reasonable belief. All these objections, however, disappear with the position that the inscriptions were the workmanship of a large body of men, dwelling for a considerable time in these valleys, and without any fixed occupation; or, as Dr Lepsius observes, "they must be the work of a pastoral people," that is, residents in the valleys. Dean Stanley no doubt states, that the "situation and appearance of the inscriptions are such as *in hardly any case* requires more than the casual work of passing travellers." Again—"None *that I saw*, unless it might be a very *doubtful* one at Petra, required ladders or machinery of any kind. *Most* of them could have been written by any one who having bare legs and feet, as all Arabs have, could take firm hold of the ledges, or by any active man even with shoes. *I think* there are none that could not have been written by one man climbing on another's shoulder." (*Sinai and Palestine*, p. 60.) This strong language is not supported by other travellers. Dr Bonar remarks on this point, "These inscriptions required iron tools, such as hammers or chisels, or pickaxes, *which pilgrims would not think of carrying with them*. We certainly carried our hammers with us; but we doubt whether pilgrims did so, though travellers do. Besides, one or two such instruments would not do.

There must have been *hundreds of chisels and hammers at work on these rocks*. They who wrote these inscriptions were certainly no engravers, but they must have known how to use iron tools, and they must have had them." The inscriptions given by the Rev. Mr Grey have frequently appended the note "*high up*." These inscriptions were in 1854 minutely tested by Captain Henry Thomas Butler, and his brother the Rev. Pierce Butler. By them the heights were accurately verified. One is described as "about forty feet from the ground, not easily accessible, but I climbed to it"—a second "about twenty feet from the ground, but accessible"—"another in one line, four feet higher, inaccessible"—a third "about ten feet from the ground, *inaccessible without a ladder*." The least height is stated to be ten or twelve feet. We have mentioned the multitude of these inscriptions. Let us add one instance of their magnitude. On the Djebel Mokatteb (written mountain) there is one inscription of forty-one lines. The first line has, from its size, been named "*The Title*." It consists of letters *six feet in length*, and the forty lines underneath are calculated to be in letters of "*one foot in length*." (*Burkhardt's Syria*, p. 607.) The height of this inscription is reckoned to be from eighty to one hundred feet. On the opposite side

of the same valley there is another inscription of corresponding size, of not fewer than *sixty* lines. One or other of these inscriptions, or both, have been supposed to be the song of Moses, composed and sung immediately after the passage of the Red Sea. There are other relics throughout the Sinaitic peninsula corroborative of the Hebrew authorship of the inscriptions. In the opinion of Niebuhr, the cemetery of Sarbut-el-Khadem was the work of the pilgrim Israelites, and identical with the burial-ground of Kibroth Hattaavah. (*Voyage en Arabie*, tome i., p. 191.) Burkhardt, in like manner, ascribes the few sepulchral monuments not to Egyptians, but to people who had been "*under Egyptian influence.*" (*Travels in Syria*, p. 482.) In like manner, in other portions of the peninsula, tablets are found with lines of Sinaitic characters, intermixed with hieroglyphics. Dr Stewart, though repudiating the Jewish origin of the inscriptions in the valleys, has the merit of this discovery, and remarks with candour, "If it be found, on further examination, that the tablets contain genuine Sinaitic inscriptions, as well as hieroglyphics, this will go far to settle the age to which *all* the others belong." (*The Tent and the Khan*, p. 88.) There exist grounds for believing that the altar

mentioned by Diodorus, long before the Christian era, as inscribed "*with unknown characters*," was at Paran or Pharan, the Scripture Rephidim, and a relic of which may yet be discovered, perhaps bearing the significant title, *Jehovah-nissi*. (Exodus xvii. 15.) It has been noticed that all the Sinaitic inscriptions are at a high altitude, as if placed in safety from the disturbing interference of passing pilgrims or passengers. There is a marked and monkey-like propensity in mankind to destroy milestones, and obliterate notices by the wayside, erected for the public benefit, and for this ruthless and often laborious work no possible motive can be discovered beyond the innate desire of mischief and destructiveness. It is a modern imagination that man is but a development of the monkey. Proof of so degraded an origin cannot be given. But there is abundant evidence that man, in his sinful state, has a strong tendency in the inverse order to sink to the level of the monkey, with perhaps a cross of the tiger. As if aware of this evil tendency in mankind, the inscribers seem to have been anxious to place these memorials beyond the reach of the idle and mischievous hands of subsequent visitants of these valleys.

Fourthly, There could be no conceivable motive

for passing pilgrims arresting their journey for the mere purpose of placing so lengthy mementoes on the rocks in a part of the world so inhospitable, and, in consequence, so unfrequented.

It would have been sufficient for them to scratch their names, and perhaps a date, and so pass on. Such inscriptions are not unfrequently to be found on the window-panes of village hostelrys in our own land. Accordingly, Dr Beer and his followers, who had no knowledge of the full collection of these records which now fortunately exist, assumed that they would be found chiefly the work of persons longing after immortality, and vainly desirous thus to perpetuate their memories. In like manner, the Chevalier Bunsen thus dismisses the authorship—“As to the age of the inscriptions, *some* of the writers of those of which we possess correct copies *must* have been Pagans. There can *scarcely* be a doubt that there are *among* them Christian inscriptions. The frequent crosses leave no doubt about this. What is still called by ignorant people the *Cruz ansata* was *probably* introduced to represent the Christian monogram for Christ. To this monogram and to the Cross, indeed, all the Christian emblems in these inscriptions are easily reducible. Christians, therefore, did make pilgrimages to the

Mount of the Law? Why *might* not Jews also? Why not Pagans? And such pilgrims *might* also record their names, as all pilgrims and travellers like to do." (*Bunsen's Christianity*, vol. iii., p. 235.) All such vain imaginings have been most amply refuted by subsequent explorations. Whilst there was no conceivable adequate motive for pilgrims so plentifully to letter over these rocks, there were most adequate and powerful reasons why the Israelites, daily witnessing most miraculous events, and without any other means of chronicling them, should, in the abundance of time and rest afforded them, have committed suitable records to the adjacent rocks, with the hope, which providentially has in far distant days been realised, that these records should proclaim the wonderful workings of their God and Leader.

"How He had wrought His signs in Egypt,
And His wonders in the field of Zoan.
But made His own people go forth like sheep,
And guided them in the wilderness like a flock,
And led them on safely, so that they feared not."

Mr Gough exposes the idea of these laborious inscriptions being the work of passing pilgrims in the following caustic passage—"Those who reflect on the fatigue of caravan travelling in these parched countries may perhaps think it very extraordinary

that pilgrims should consume the little leisure such journeys afford in attaching themselves to a rock (even the shady side) at the height of 12 or 14 feet, to carve letters, which, while they are described to approach nearest to the Hebrew of any known character, are intended to be represented as bearing no more meaning than the scrawls of children with chalk on a wall." (*Nichol's Literary Anecdotes*, vol. ii., p. 244.) Laborde remarks—"These inscriptions come out clearly on the red ground of the rock; and the irregularity of the lines betrays the unskilfulness of the persons who confided their story to the custody of these rocks." (*Journey to Mount Sinai*, p. 262.) "The rude manner in which they are exhibited may well be supposed to be such as belonged to the time when men first began to inscribe on rocks their abiding memorials." (Note in *Pictorial Bible*, p. 151.)

Fifthly, It being thus abundantly proved that the inscriptions were the work of one age, and the workmanship of a multitude, requiring long time and labour for their execution, it follows that those who were engaged in this work must have been miraculously sustained during the time they were thus occupied.

All travellers who have visited the locality, agree that the valleys of Sinai are wholly with-

out the means of sustenance for man and beast. No language can more graphically represent the state of the land than that of Scripture—"A waste and howling wilderness." Dr Olin, in his volume of travels in Egypt and the Holy Land, has thus described the locality—"No reflection forced itself upon me so often or so urgently, in passing over the track of the Israelites, as the utter and universal inaptitude of this country for the sustenance of animal life. It seems really to possess no elements favourable to human existence besides a pure atmosphere, and no appearances favour the supposition that it was ever essentially better. I am filled with wonder that so many travellers should task their ingenuity to get clear of the miracles, which, according to Moses, were wrought to facilitate the journey of that vast unwieldy host, when it is demonstrable they could not have existed three days in this desert without supernatural resources. The extensive region, through which we were twelve days in passing on dromedaries, is and ever must have been incapable of affording food sufficient to support even a thousand or a few hundred people for a month. There is no corn land or pasturage, no game or roots, hardly any birds or insects, and the scanty supply of water is loathsome to the taste. What could the

two millions of Israel have eaten, without the miracle of the manna and the quails? How could they have escaped destruction by drought but for the healing of the waters of Mara." (*Dr Olin's Travels in the Holy Land*, vol. i., p. 381.) To the same effect the Prefetto of Egypt describes the valley "as a place where there is neither water nor anything to eat." Still more graphic is the language of Dr Bonar—"No verdure, no life, no spring seed, no budding leaf, no blithe blossom, no fragrant herb, no summer incense, nothing to soften or animate the scene. Woods, streams, and flowers, what is earth without you, and with you what a land would this be? But its dead scorched nakedness is terrific, though sublime beyond conception. No sunshine would make it joyous, though the cloud and the blast would certainly make it more dismal and appalling." From these quotations it will be seen, on the one hand, how impossible it is that pilgrims could carry sustenance with them sufficient for a period necessary for performing the lengthy task of unnecessary labour; whilst, on the other hand, the very existence of these multitudinous inscriptions affords no small corroboration of the miraculous sustentation of the thousands of Israel in this inhospitable wilderness. Baron Lepsius, though a supporter of

Dr Beer in his hypothesis of a modern date to these inscriptions, nevertheless is compelled to assign them to a pastoral people resident in the land. This, of course, is repugnant to their being the workmanship of passing pilgrims, and corroborative of their being that of a people who for a time were settled in the valleys, but who, as is proved, could not have sojourned therein for any length of time without miraculous support, and of such residents no record is given but that of the children of Israel.

Sixthly, We have proof in Holy Scripture that the Israelites did write and inscribe on stone.

Coming straight from Egypt, the cradle of the arts, and nursery of science, and whose magicians for a time withstood even God's own appointed Prophet, the Hebrews, amidst all their oppression, must have learned much from their masters. Among these acquirements, that of symbolising by hieroglyphics could not be unknown. The Books of Moses record Bezaleel and Aholiab as men who were set apart to perform "*all manner of work of the engraver.*" In the wilderness, Moses was thus commanded to form the breastplate of judgment—"Thou shalt set it in settings of stone, even four rows of stones, and the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve

according to their names, *like the engravings of a signet.*" (Exodus xxviii. 15.) In Deuteronomy (chapter xxvii.), Moses is recorded to have given directions, that, when the tribes passed over Jordan, they should set up great stones, and plaster them with plaster, and write upon them all the words of their law; and in a subsequent verse (8) — "And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly." By some commentators it is supposed that this commandment applied to the whole Pentateuch, or five Books of Moses, and none of them doubt but that it extended beyond the Decalogue or Ten Commandments, and at least comprehended the whole Ritual or Levitical Law. Of this last opinion is the learned commentator Scott. These facts establish that the Israelites, on the very threshold of their entry into Canaan, had the capabilities as well as the opportunity of inscribing at great length on stone.

Seventhly, The language of the inscriptions is such as the Israelites might be supposed to know and to use.

The language adopted in these inscriptions is the Hamyaratic or ancient Arabic, which at that time was in use in Egypt, and with which the Israelites must have been acquainted during their

sojourn of 215 years. This character is identical with the enchorial, or popular and common alphabet of the country, as found on the Rosetta Stone, and in the quarries of Masara, which are well ascertained to be of a date long prior to the era of Moses and the exode from Egypt.* Egyptian inscriptions are interspersed with hieroglyphics, and so are those on the rocks of Sinai. So important is this, that without this key, many an obscure passage would be difficult of translation, if not altogether an insolvable riddle. Christian pilgrims from Arabia, in the fourth or fifth centuries, were not at all likely to have made use of Egyptian characters or hieroglyphics, as necessary to express their full meaning. It has been questioned, if these inscriptions are the workmanship of the Israelites, how does it happen

* The Rosetta Stone is a block of dark-coloured granite. It was discovered by the *savans* who accompanied the first Napoleon to Egypt. It was fished out of the branch of the Nile called Rosetta, and hence its name. After the battle of the Nile, it was sent from Alexandria to the British Museum, where it remains. It is in three languages, and finishes somewhat in these words—"This decree shall be inscribed on a tablet of hard stone—in the sacred—the vernacular—and the Greek character." By reading the Greek, a key has been thus found to open up the other two unknown languages. This discovery has been instrumental in aiding the decipherment of many ancient inscriptions. The three-fold languages may remind the reader of the threefold superscription on the Cross of Calvary.

that the language is not the Hebrew of the Pentateuch? The answer is, that whatever was the original language of the patriarchs, it cannot be supposed that their descendants whilst in Egypt could avoid adopting the language of the people amongst whom they dwelt for so many generations. Indeed, by some scholars it has been thought that the Hebrew of the Pentateuch was divinely imparted to the tribes at the giving of the law, when a new generation had sprung up who had not acquired the dialect of Egypt, but now received a peculiar language, which, with other specialties, might for ever keep them a separate and peculiar people among the nations of the earth. The 81st Psalm has been referred to as supporting this theory—"When he went out through the land of Egypt; where I heard a language *that I understood not.*"

Eighthly, An extraordinary rendering has recently been given by a Hebrew to a passage in the Book of Numbers (c. xi. 26), to prove that the Mosaic records recognise these inscriptions.

In the strange episode of Eldad and Medad, it is said, "The Spirit rested upon them (*and they were of them that were written*, but went not out unto the tabernacle); and they prophesied in the camp." The words rendered, from the

Septuagint and Vulgate, by our translators, "*of them that were written*," have ever been admitted as obscure. By some they have been held to refer to a roll written by Moses of the names of the elders. On the text Calvin has the following comment:—"It is not certain why they had not appeared amongst the others. I do not at all doubt but that they were called for by Moses; nor would they have been endued with the same grace of the Spirit as the others, if, through idleness or contempt, they had not come at the time appointed. We may therefore infer that they did not actually receive the intimation, *because they could not be found*." In a work, entitled, "*A Pilgrimage to the Land of My Fathers*," published in 1850, a new interpretation is proposed from the original Hebrew. For the words, "*they were of them that were written*," the author substitutes the words, "*they were among the Cthoobeem or inscriptions*." "These men went not unto the tabernacle because they were elsewhere directing the execution of the lasting records of the exode. The Israelites were then at Kibroth Hattaavah, and where there exists the greatest collection of inscriptions." (*Pilgrimage*, vol. i., p. 6.) There is also, in confirmation of this reading, a singular coincidence between the Mosaic term Catoobim

and the Arabic word Mo-katteb, both significant of writing or inscriptions.

Ninthly, All the facts connected with these inscriptions unite in placing their date before the Christian era.

Cosmas ascertained their existence in the sixth century, and established their antiquity in his time. They are still nearly in the same condition, making allowance for the additional tear and wear of the fourteen centuries which have since run their course. It has been already mentioned that Cosmas left a memorial of his visit to these valleys in a Greek inscription. Besides this, there have been found other short Greek, Latin, and even English inscriptions, obviously of more modern date. One remarkable fact, however, is, that almost all the ancient and lengthy records are on the shady side of the valley—apparently that the workmen might, during their labour, be sheltered from the scorching rays of the sun—a provision not unknown in Scripture metaphor. But the few and brief records of more modern times are on the sunny side, such as a passing traveller might inscribe in the cool of the morning or evening. (*Grey, Trans. R. S. of Lit.*, vol. ii., p. 147.) It is, however, right to mention, that the fact of the inscriptions being on the shady side of the valley,

though attested by Professor Beer, Dr Robinson, and Mr Grey, is disputed by Dr Bonar. Some of the more modern inscriptions afford undoubted evidence, from names and events, that they have been inscribed in the century prior to the Christian era, and therefore four centuries before the date assigned by Dr Beer to the more extensive inscriptions plentifully carved around. There is one Greek inscription, which, from its allusion to names and events, has been fixed at the 85th year before Christ. There is another inscription in Latin declaring the conquest of Syria by the Romans—(*Cessent Syri ante Latinos Romanos*). This is unmistakably fixed in the age of Trajan, the Roman conqueror of Arabia Petrea, giving an antiquity of upwards of 1,759 years to this inscription. It indicates a triumph of the Latin people and language over those of Syria, and thus seems appropriately to have been placed beside those inscriptions which it is thus boastingly proclaimed to have superseded. Dr Stewart confirms the existence of inscriptions of more modern date than the great majority. He mentions three or four in Greek, one in Hebrew, and one in Latin. Dr Bonar corroborates this, and mentions one in English. Another remarkable fact is, that all the numerous inscriptions in ancient characters have obviously been executed by the

same kind of instrument—punching out a series of holes both for letters and figures. But the more modern inscriptions are cut out with different kinds of tools, and in divers styles, as seemed best to please the taste or fancy of the artist. (*Grey*, vol. ii., p. 147.) The Chevalier Bunsen admits, “all the inscriptions which are not Greek are of one character.” *Bunsen’s Christianity and Mankind*, vol. iii., p. 235.

Lastly, The remaining point of evidence is more of the internal than of the external class. In all the authoritative translations there has not been found one allusion to Christ and New Testament facts or characters.

There are now very full and accurate translations of the inscriptions, so full that had Dr Beer and his supporters enjoyed their advantage, it is believed that those eminent scholars would not have taken up the negative position which, once assumed, they appear unwilling to abandon. There is not even one reference made to any historical fact under the Old Testament dispensation posterior to the Pentateuch or the five Books of Moses. There are numerous unmistakable references to events which are there recorded as occurring in the Hebrew passage through the wilderness, and these are given as being coeval with the inscriptions, and

happening before the eyes of the inscribers. These records are never given in the phraseology of the Scripture records. This shows that the inscriptions were made before the writing of the Mosaic records, or at least before their promulgation. It is also an important fact, as showing the characteristics of the people, that not one ungodly expression has been discovered among the numerous inscriptions, though the workmanship of many hands.

The only seemingly formidable piece of evidence on which Dr Beer and his followers rest their negative position is, what they conceive to be the oft-repeated sign of the Cross. This they assume to have been a sign unknown before the crucifixion of our Divine Redeemer. There are two kinds of cuneiform letters. The one is the usual form of the Cross similar to the Roman capital T; the other is similar to our capital letter Y. Dr Beer candidly admits that he has never found any actual cross in this latter shape, though he cynically adds, "this I think of very slight moment." *Introd.*, p. 13. It is now proved beyond all controversy, that the first form of the Cross in the inscription, is the letter T, which has the same or nearly the same configuration in the alphabets of the Hebrews, Egyptians, Assyrians, Bactrians,

Etruscans, Ethiopians, and in our own. The other, or truncated letter, has, in like manner, been proved, by comparison with the Rosetta stone, and the inscriptions of Masara, to be an Egyptian hieroglyphic. In fact, the existence of these letters as signs of the Cross proves too much. The same letters are found in inscriptions of the old and new world, not excepting Central America, both in temples and tombs, of a date long before the Christian era, as well as in Nineveh, inscribed, it is believed, not much later than the dispersion at Babel. The power of the *Crux ansata*, or sacred Tau, or letter T, is equivalent to life, completion, possession, or property. It is shown, by reference to ancient hieroglyphics, that this mark was painted on animals, as the sign of identity and ownership, as we are in use still to do with flocks of sheep. It formed the goal in ancient games, and the keen curler of our land will recognise its successor on the icy rink, as the ardent object of his aim. It is even common, when parties are agreed on any point, to indicate their agreement by the same mysterious letter of our alphabet.

Dr Stewart, although not satisfied, at the time he wrote, with the proof adduced for the Hebrew origin of these inscriptions, candidly abandons any reliance on the supposed figure of the Cross. He

thus deals with the subject—"That many modern names, with the figure of the Cross prefixed or following, have been scratched on and around the ancient characters, no one who has visited the spot can doubt. But to my eye, the symbol in the more ancient inscriptions resembled more closely the Egyptian *Tau* than the Christian Cross." "The clear inference is, that the occurrence of this symbol in these inscriptions cannot of itself, without further corroborative evidence, be held as fixing their execution at a date posterior to the Christian era." (*Tent and Khan*, p. 89). Dr Bonar concurs with Mr Stewart in setting aside all reference to the supposed figure of the Cross, as proof of these inscriptions being of modern date.

Professor Beer argued against the antiquity of these inscriptions, because of their being unknown until the time of Cosmas. Here two distinct facts are confounded—namely, existence and discovery. It would be equally good logic to deny the record of Cosmas, because no further notice was taken of the inscriptions until many centuries thereafter. There doubtless was knowledge of these inscriptions, and perhaps even notice of them recorded, though the record of Cosmas has alone come down to our time. The same train of illogical argument

would compel us to exclude the antiquities of ancient Egypt and Assyria, as well as the daily discoveries in our own land of the relics of pre-historic times, some hid in tumuli, and others, similar to those in the valleys of Sinai, inscribed on the rocks and caves of our sea-shores.

PART THIRD.

THEIR IMPORT.

WE now enter into what is perhaps the most convincing and interesting portion of our subject—the reading of these stone legends. It must be at once conceded that this is a subject which few can test. But we have the translations of Mr Forster, whose scholarship and lengthened experience in this particular department rank very high. He has given the originals in separate lines, with his translation underneath. He has challenged the whole learned world to detect an error, and we believe that not one, even the slightest, has been shown. On the other hand, Dean Stanley, the keenest and most learned of his opponents, thus very candidly declares his ignorance of the language in which these records are expressed. “I briefly sum up my experience of the Sinaitic inscriptions, in which of course I go entirely by their appearance, not by their language, of which

I have no knowledge whatever." (*Sinai and Palestine*, p. 59.) *

In the first place, in the majority of the inscriptions there is a peculiarity in the first or initial word. It is now generally agreed that this word is the Hebrew "*om*"—"the people." The final term is generally the ineffable name "Jehovah." Even Dr Beer gives testimony to the oft-recurrence of this sacred word. The repetition of these two words almost of itself testifies that the inscribers were the people whose God and Leader was Jehovah. Christian pilgrims using, as has been thought, the sign of the cross, would have as frequently added the name of him who hung thereon; whereas, whilst this sacred name is nowhere to be found, that of the God of the Hebrews appears on almost every separate inscription. Dr Beer, whilst admitting the recurrence of the name of the Godhead, is desirous to render the initial word "*om*" as *Shalum*," or *Peace*. He assumes that this term was the mere expression of salutation or salam of peace. In one place, this word, in the view of the learned Professor as indicative of peace, strangely enough has been found in-

* In the fifth edition (1858) of his work, the Dean modifies his confession thus :—"To enter more fully into the subject would require a knowledge of languages which I do not possess" (p. 59).

scribed over two men in the act of fighting! This is an apt illustration of *Lucus a non lucendo*, or light from darkness, or the cry of peace when there is no peace!

We shall now select only two or three passages from the numerous translations, leaving to the curious to examine for themselves the works of Mr Forster and others, for many more striking than those we are about to give as specimens. No. 59 of Grey's collection is in these words:—

*The people with prone mouth drinketh at the water springs.
The people at the two water springs kicketh like an ass.
Smiting with the branch of a tree, the well of bitterness he
healeth.*

In Grey's collection there was appended a note, "*A quadruped opposite the last line but one.*" Mr Forster at once declared that this figure would be found to be that of *an ass*. On turning to Professor Beer's *Century of Sinaitic Inscriptions*, his prognostication was verified by finding the full assinine figure delineated. Besides identifying the people with the Israelites under the similitude of the wild ass, the whole of the above passage has an obvious reference to the murmuring of the Israelites at the waters of Marah, and the healing of the waters by the intervention of the wood, symbolical of the cross. But the people are said

to have drunk with "*prone mouth*," or in a stooping position. The same expression is found in other Sinaitic inscriptions. But the passage in Exodus, recording the event at Marah, makes no mention of the posture of the people when satiating their ardent thirst. Here arises one of those latent or incidental allusions which, more than any argument, make good the authenticity of a record. In a posterior book of our Bible we are informed that such, with the Israelites, was a national, although seemingly an unnatural, position of drinking water—in an open country, it may be, with the view of not polluting the scanty stream. We are informed, in the Book of Judges, that Gideon's army drank at a stream, and that the great multitude who followed the national posture of imbibition were relieved from the special service at hand. The few who adopted an unusual, though perhaps a more natural, mode of quenching their thirst, were selected as the chosen instruments of Jehovah, to testify that "it is not by might or by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

In the midst of the above quoted inscription, there are rude delineations of two wells with their outflow. This place is still known as the bitter well of Howarah, about fifty miles from Suez.

Many travellers have recorded the fact, that when rejoicing in sight of water, and hastening to quench their thirst, they were suddenly and sadly checked by the cry of the Bedouins—" *Marah, Marah,*" meaning *bitter, bitter*. They all agree in the strange fact, that this is the only well in the whole peninsula which is bitter and undrinkable. (*Burckhardt's Travels in Syria*, p. 475-3; *Robinson's Biblical Researches*, Vol. I., p. 95-8; *Lord Lindsay's Travels*, Vol. I., p. 23, 26.) One of these fountains is still extant, and those who have compared the delineation on the rock have found an exact agreement in the shape of the fountain. The stream abruptly terminates, being lost or swallowed up in the sand. How strange that the exact locality of a water-spring should have been thus ascertained by its rude delineation on an adjacent rock, made three thousand years before, and that the very figure of the well should have also remained undisturbed all that time.

A very striking inscription relates to the miraculous passage of the Red Sea. The 17th verse of the 15th chapter of Exodus is familiar to all Scripture readers. It forms no part of the narrative of the Egyptian discomfiture, but breaks in as a foot-note or marginal explanation of the allusion to the horse and his rider in the Song of

Moses. The explanatory words are—“*For the horse of Pharaoh* went in with his chariots and his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them.” There is here an undoubted reference to the *individual horse* of the Egyptian monarch. It is customary to take the word *horse* as a collective noun, and to render it as having reference to the cavalry of Egypt. But this cannot well be, as “*his chariots and his horsemen*” are immediately after mentioned as accompanying the King and *his horse*. The same peculiarity is found in the triumphal Song of Moses, sung immediately after the catastrophe—

I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously,
The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

That this event was worthy of special notice is shown by the fact that these two lines form the response, refrain, or chorus of Miriam and her band of females with their timbrels. The 19th verse appears inserted so as to explain the reason why this fact is so prominently brought forward in this sublime jubilate.

Let us now turn to the rocky tablets in search of this Imperial horse. One inscription is in these words—

The people journeyed through the passage terror-stricken.
Urges onward with slackened rein benignantly Jehovah *the people*.
The people essayeth the waters, Pharaoh retrogradeth.
Reins back his war horse.

Another inscription, taken by another hand, runs thus—

Fleeth the *swift long horse*, raising both fore feet together, going at full speed, *his rider* dashed to the ground.

Pharaoh running with long strides, like a fleet horse takes startled flight, casting off violently with both hands, to quicken *his pace*, his helmet.

In both inscriptions there is thus a distinct reference to the *individual* horse of the Egyptian monarch. In illustration, there is added the figure of a horse in various postures. In one place, Pharaoh, distinguished by the well-known hieroglyphic of the hawk's head, is seen on horseback in flight; in another he is reining back his horse to turn him; and finally, he is seen on foot in flight. (*Grey's Collection*, No. 68, and *Forster*, Vol. I., p. 81.)

A curious fact is mentioned by Mr Forster with reference to these inscriptions. An artist in the train of Le Comte d'Antraigues, in 1779, made a *fac simile* of an inscription on Djebel Mokatteb. This was printed in the posthumous letters of the historian Müller. No reading could be obtained

of this print until Mr Forster discovered it had, from ignorance, been printed upside down. By restoring its position, it was found identical with No. 68 of Mr Grey's Collection, being the Title to the inscription recording the passage of the Red Sea.

Both in the collection of Professor Beer and Mr Grey, there is the figure of a man on the top of a large stone, and whose hands are uplifted. Dr Bonar was much impressed with this figure. Underneath are the sentences—

Prayeth unto God the Prophet upon a hard great stone, his hands sustaining Aaron, Hur.

No words can more graphically describe the supplications which turned the tide of the battle of Rephidim, as recorded in Exodus xvii. 8—
“When Moses and Aaron and Hur went up to the top of the Hill, and Moses' hands were heavy, and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands.”

In Grey's collection, No. 27, there is the representation of a pool of water with the inscription—

The eloquent speaker strikes the rock: flows forth the water, falling down.

The eloquent speaker bowing the head takes his rod in his hand, resounds the rock struck.

This has an obvious reference to the miracle of the rock of Meribah-Kadesh. Two points are here

worthy of notice, which once more bring out a latent reference. We would be apt to assign to Aaron, and not to Moses, the title of the "*Eloquent Speaker*." But on turning to the seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we find, at the 22d verse, that Moses is characterised as "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, *mighty in words and deeds*." Again, in the inscription the actor is stated as "*bowing his head*." To this no reference is made in the narrative in the 20th chapter of Numbers; but on turning to the 34th chapter of Exodus, in the narration of a similar event, it is recorded, that "Moses made haste *and bowed his head* towards the earth and worshipped."

A very instructive inscription forms No. 82 of Mr Grey's collection. There is distinctly represented the figure of a man prostrate, with his face upwards, and the figure of a coiled serpent descending on him. The following are the words underneath, amidst which two smaller serpents are enclosed:—

Destroy spring on the *people* the fiery serpents hissing, injecting
venom.

Heralds of death they kill.

The people, prostrate on their backs, curling in folds

They wind round, descending on, bearing destruction.

Much learned discussion has been raised as to

the characteristics of the fiery serpents mentioned in the Mosaic record. The allusions in the Prophecies of Isaiah to "fiery *flying* serpents" have been supposed to refer to the plague in the wilderness. Burckhardt and other travellers have endeavoured to show, that in Egypt there are or were winged serpents known by the name of *seraph*. The narrative in Exodus does not mention wings, and no figure of winged serpents is seen on the rocks. The word fiery is by some supposed to have reference to their bright or fiery appearance, so well symbolised by the brazen serpent, the significant type of the crucifixion.* By others, the term is supposed to indicate the inflammatory or fiery appearance of the wound inflicted by the reptile. Calmet and other writers fix on the *Jaculus* as exactly corresponding with the description of the fiery serpents of the sacred volume. It has so great muscular power and velocity as to give it the appearance of flying. The pictures on the rocks answer to the description of this species. Captain Fraser, in his Journal, mentions snakes seen in the vicinity of Sinai, and which the Arabs called "*flying ser-*

* The serpent on a pole was a standard of the Egyptians. Such representations have been discovered in the temple of Osiris at Philæ. (*Colonel Vyse, Pyramids of Gizeh*, vol. i., p. 68.)

pents." In length these animals were about three feet, and their bite was venomous, and in most cases deadly. They skim the ground like flying fish. They are destitute of wings, but make lofty and great leaps upwards and forwards.

It may be here mentioned that, so far as has yet been discovered, this is the only record on the rocks of a miracle of wrath or punishment. How true to humanity, so soon forgetful of such visitations, and never anxious to perpetuate the memory of the sins which called for such judgments.

A difficulty has been stated as to the position of the record of the serpentine visitation. The inscription of this, the last miracle in the pilgrimage, is in the valley which forms the entrance from Egypt. Dr Stewart takes the same objection as to the position of the inscription recording Moses smiting the rock. Dr Bonar repeats it, and adds some other malpositions of the like kind. This admits of easy explanation, tending rather to corroborate the authenticity of the inscriptions. Although the tribes tabernacled at stated places, as directed by the Pillar of Cloud, it is not to be supposed that so large a multitude were fixed to the same spot. In fact, the Scriptures speak of the pilgrimage as "*wanderings.*" We learn that they revisited certain places, such as Kadesh.

Their flocks and herds must have been moved hither and thither, to the different oases in the desert, where herbage might be found for sustenance. (*Olin's Travels*, vol. i., p. 382.) Herdsmen must have attended the cattle, and thus, whilst watching their herds, they had ample time and opportunity to record on the adjacent rocks the chief memories of their eventful history. It is not, therefore, to be expected, that the series of inscriptions should be found either in chronological or topographical order. If it had been so, it might have been argued, that after generations had inscribed these legends on places supposed to have been the scenes of events in the pilgrimage which it was thus desired to memorialise.

We shall only introduce one other inscription, because of the important elucidation it may afford to a rather obscure passage in the Pentateuch. In Exodus xvi. 11-13, it is recorded, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God. And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up and covered the camp." A more particular account of this event is given in the book of Numbers (xi. 18, 20,

31 and 33)—“And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day’s journey on this side, and as it were a day’s journey on the other side, round about the camp, and, *as it were*, two cubits high upon the face of the earth. And the people *stood up* all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they *gathered* the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers: and they *spread them* all abroad for themselves round about the camp.”

The translators of our time-honoured, and, as a whole, admirable, because literal version of the Scriptures, translate the word “*Salwa*,” or “*Sahu*,” as meaning “*quails*.” In this they have followed the Septuagint and Vulgate, and have also the authority of Josephus. This meaning, however, has been disputed by several scholars. Bishop Patrick and others are of opinion that “*Sahu*” might be better translated “*locusts*.” The word only occurs this one time in the Holy Scriptures, and thus we are deprived of the help of comparison. All the context, however, is adverse to its application to insects, but favourable to its representing a species of bird. It was *flesh* the tribes had eaten in Egypt, *flesh* they lusted after, and it is said they did eat *flesh*. So in the 78th Psalm it is

recorded, "They tempted God in their heart by asking *meat* for their lust."

"Can He give bread also?
Can He provide *flesh* for His people?
He caused an east wind to blow in the heavens,
And by His power He brought in the south wind;
He rained *flesh* also upon them as dust,
And *feathered fowls* as the sand of the sea,
And He let it fall in the midst of their camp,
Round about their habitations."

This assuredly fixes the fact that birds were the animals which were miraculously sent to supply the desire of the people for flesh. But the peculiar kind of bird may still be a problem. The Israelites, as is recorded, spread the carcasses about the camp, obviously to be dried for future use. It is not an uncommon notion that the quails, like the manna, fell in daily supplies. Whereas such a supply appears only to have occurred once; and the Divine record expressly says, they were to eat flesh for a whole month. The quail species, from their fatness, were unsuitable for preservation. Bishop Patrick observes, "They would be corrupted and destroyed instead of being dried and preserved by exposure to the sun." Then there is the fact that he that gathered least gathered ten homers, which is inconsistent

with birds of a small size. According to Burckhardt the homer was considerably larger than an English hogshead. By some writers it is estimated at an ass's load, or eight bushels, or one quarter imperial measure. Within two days and one night the least active and successful of the Israelites filled ten times this measure, or something like 750 gallons. Wholly unprepared for the carnival, they could only make use of their hands to seize or gather the feathered tribes. They are said to have been gathered, not caught. Egyptian hieroglyphics show a mode of netting birds which comes as close as may be to collecting or gathering. The Hebrew word rendered "gathered," it is said, admits of being rendered, "dragged, caught, or drew back."

There is one portion of the passage, more than any other, occasioning difficulty. The animals, whatever birds they were, are said to have fallen round the camp, "and *as it were* two cubits high upon the face of the ground." The usual and literal reading of this is, that the animals fell down, and formed as it were a solid wall of two cubits in height. This interpretation cannot well be admitted. It at once removes the necessity of gathering, or room for comparison of quantities, the reward of industry and activity, and excludes

the notion of subsequent spreading of the carcasses. The idea of a wall of animal matter, either dead or alive, between three and four feet in height, and extending over a length of from twelve to fifteen miles, is more than simply miraculous, it is monstrous. Such a supply would have sustained tens of millions instead of two millions of people, and would have occasioned pestilence in place of plenty. Such a phenomenon would be quite alien to the beautiful simplicity of Scripture miracles, and would stand a strange contrast to the miracles of the manna or bread. This difficulty appeared to Josephus, who supposed that the two cubits were the height which the birds in their exhausted state flew above the ground, thus affording an easy capture by those for whose mouths they were intended. There is another and easier solution of the difficulty. It is well known that there is a long-legged goose, in height three feet and a half, that being the very measurement mentioned in the sacred record. It is now thought that the two cubits were the height of the birds which flocked round the camp, and that they were the wild or sea geese. It is well known that the flesh of these birds is good for food. The barnacle, of the species of *anas* or *anser*, is mentioned by naturalists as congregating in great

flocks. It is recorded that, in 1740, such an invasion of these birds occurred in Picardy as to call for a general war to extirpate them, but in vain, until the north wind which wafted them thither ceased to blow, when they took their departure seaward. This fact illustrates the Scripture record, "There went forth a wind from the Lord and brought quails (*salus*) from the sea." (Numbers xi. 31.) Still more illustrative is the passage from the 78th Psalm relating to the same event:—

"He caused an east wind to blow in the heavens:
And by His power He brought in the south wind.
He rained flesh also upon them as dust,
And feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea."

Dean Stanley mentions, that, at the reputed scene of the miracle, on "one occasion the sky was literally darkened by the flight of innumerable birds, which proved to be red-legged cranes, three feet high, with black and white wings, measuring seven feet from tip to tip." The Dean coincides with the view that the passage in the Pentateuch refers to the size of the individual birds, and not to the height of the accumulated mass. (*Sinai and Palestine*, pp. 81–3.)

Having thus briefly set forth these difficulties, we turn to the numerous rocky inscriptions which

mention this great event. The people indeed appear to have become jubilant at this great and sudden increase to their larder and kitchen. Mankind have ever been peculiarly sensitive in the region of their stomach. Esau is but the type of humanity in bartering the abiding interests of the soul for the immediate gratification of appetite. A Dutch philosopher, one Van Helmont, argued for the stomach being the seat of the soul. His practical disciples are Legion, who seem to live to eat instead of eating to live. The three following inscriptions are selected from a multitude, and taken from the collection of Professor Beer:—

The red geese ascend from the sea,
Lusting the people, eat on at them.

Again—

The red geese ascend from the sea,
Lusting the people devour until nought is left.

Once more—

The red geese ascend from the sea,
Lusting the people eat to repletion.

There are represented vast numbers of large birds amidst these inscriptions, which Professor Beer supposed to represent ostriches, but which in more respects resemble the large red goose. It will be observed in all the inscriptions above cited,

that the birds which came from the sea are expressly called *Nuham Bahari*, "nuhams from the sea," which corresponds with the description given by naturalists of the *Bernacle*, *Casarca*, or long-legged red geese.

We can remember, and doubtless many of our readers may have similar recollections, that when in childhood, reading in the books of Moses of wells dug and fought for, of pillars set up and oil poured thereon, of stones placed on spots where some great manifestation of God was displayed—the oft-repeated words clung to our opening fancy, "and which are there to this day." Confounding the time when the record was written with the time when it was read by ourselves, we yearned to visit these lands, and to look with ravished delight on these hoary memorials of this world's childhood. We humbly believe that such references were not without a reason and a benefit. Before the written record was complete, these monumental stones testified to early generations the truth of facts in the same way as sundry articles laid up in the ark testified to events in the early history of the

Hebrew nation. Children were invited to ask their parents "what mean these stones?" The natural craving for memorials, in more modern times, in the hand of the enemy of souls, has been made the instrument of gross superstition and imposition. The adoration of supposed relics of saints, of imaginary holy places and shrines of unknown saints, is the fruit of this exaggerated feeling. Such superstition was the occasion of the several Crusades, with their attendant sacrifices of blood and treasure. Similar causes resulted in the recent Crimean war, which had its origin in a foolish dispute between the Latin and Greek Churches as to their priority of right to visit a supposed holy chapel. No such references to memorial-places are to be found in the New Testament. Our Saviour set aside all such local attractions. "Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." It appears, as a clear manifestation of this grand spiritual truth, that almost in no particular point of Bible topography

are travellers agreed. Nearly every successive traveller in Palestine controverts the views of his predecessors as to particular localities. The point in the Red Sea where the tribes of Israel made their miraculous passage is still the subject of controversy, as well as their route through and encampments in the wilderness. So, too, with the mountain on which God in His glory descended, and spoke His enduring law to His people, and through them to all mankind. In like manner, the exact day and place of the nativity of the Redeemer, as well as the place of the sepulchre which for a brief time held our Lord, are matters of doubt. The ascertainment of all or any of these places would not add in the least to our faith in God's Word, or trust in His redeeming mercy.

The Rev. Mr M'Cheyne of Dundee, in describing his visit to Syria, remarked, "the scene which might seem of greatest interest in Jerusalem is Calvary, where the Son of God died. But God has so willed it that nothing but pain and disappointments follow the inquirers after the spot where the blood flowed "which cleanseth from all sin." In like manner, even Renan observes, "We might say that in topography, as well as in history, a profound design has wished to cancel the traces

of the great founder. It is doubtful whether we can be able, upon this extensively devastated soil, to ascertain the places where mankind would gladly come to kiss the imprint of their God."

To those who have candidly and thoroughly investigated the authenticity of the rock inscriptions of Sinai, there remains little or no doubt of their being the workmanship of the Hebrews. Lord Lyndhurst, perhaps the greatest jurist of the age, after such investigation, gave his high sanction to this being the fact. There have been others, and it would be unfair to deny to some of them high character and credit, who assign to these inscriptions a modern date. These writers, however, were ignorant of the tenor of the inscriptions, which have only recently been published, and which are far from being yet exhausted. Had this, which forms the internal evidence, been placed fully before them, we believe that there are few or none of them but would have reached an opposite conclusion. The recent almost miraculous discoveries and appliances of photography, in its many branches, have done much, and are still designed to do more, in increasing the stores of inscriptions. On the other hand, the more minute researches of scholars and philologists into the ancient languages and dialects of the East, will

enable these legends to be deciphered with greater care and accuracy. The Palestine Exploration Mission, if they extend their labours as far as the Wilderness, may be expected greatly to augment our information as to the number, position, and tenor of the pictures and inscriptions in the valleys of the Peninsula.

The enemies of our most holy faith have recently directed their artillery chiefly against the books of Moses. With the subtlety of the ancient enemy of humanity, they vainly think, if they can sap the foundations of our faith in its oldest records with weak and willing minds, they might peradventure succeed in upsetting the superstructure. Therefore, if the Almighty, in His careful providence over His own Book, has opened a new magazine of evidence, such is not to be despised, but ought to form cause of gratitude. Are we not warranted to conclude that this line of evidence has been provided by God in His infinite wisdom, like the records in the mounds of Nineveh, and brought to light in these last days to meet the infidel on his own ground, and effectually repel his assaults? Nor can we tell what use God may be pleased to make of it for confirming the faith of the people of God themselves, and removing their doubts when assailed

by temptations in new forms. Nevertheless, the true and humble Christian, who walks by faith and not by sight, can with the Word, in the hand of the Spirit, dispense with all such auxiliaries. It is well observed by Coleridge, "make a man feel the want of Christianity, and you may safely trust it to its own evidence."

" A glory gilds the sacred page,
Majestic as the sun ;
It gives a light to every age,
It gives, but borrows none."

FINIS.

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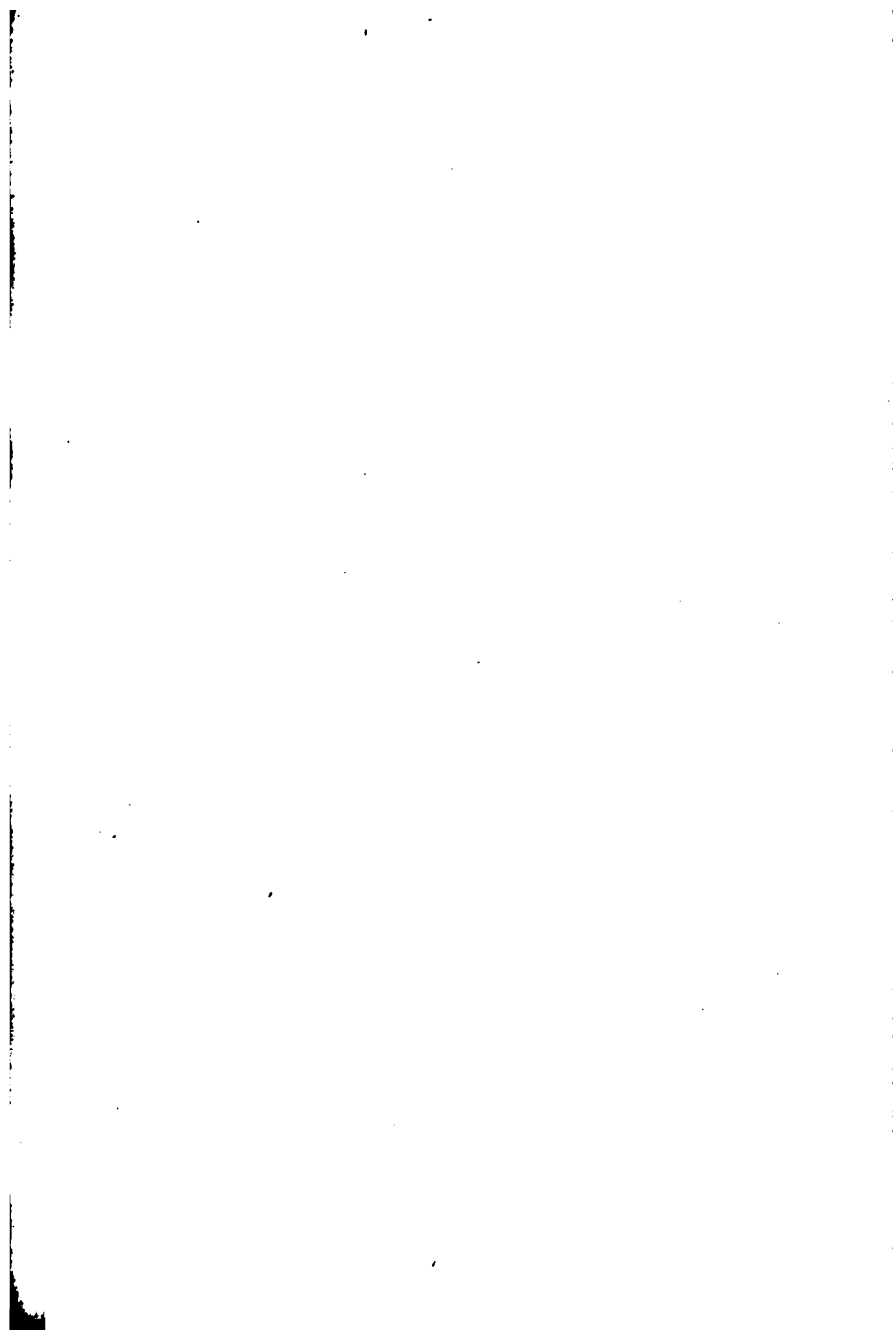
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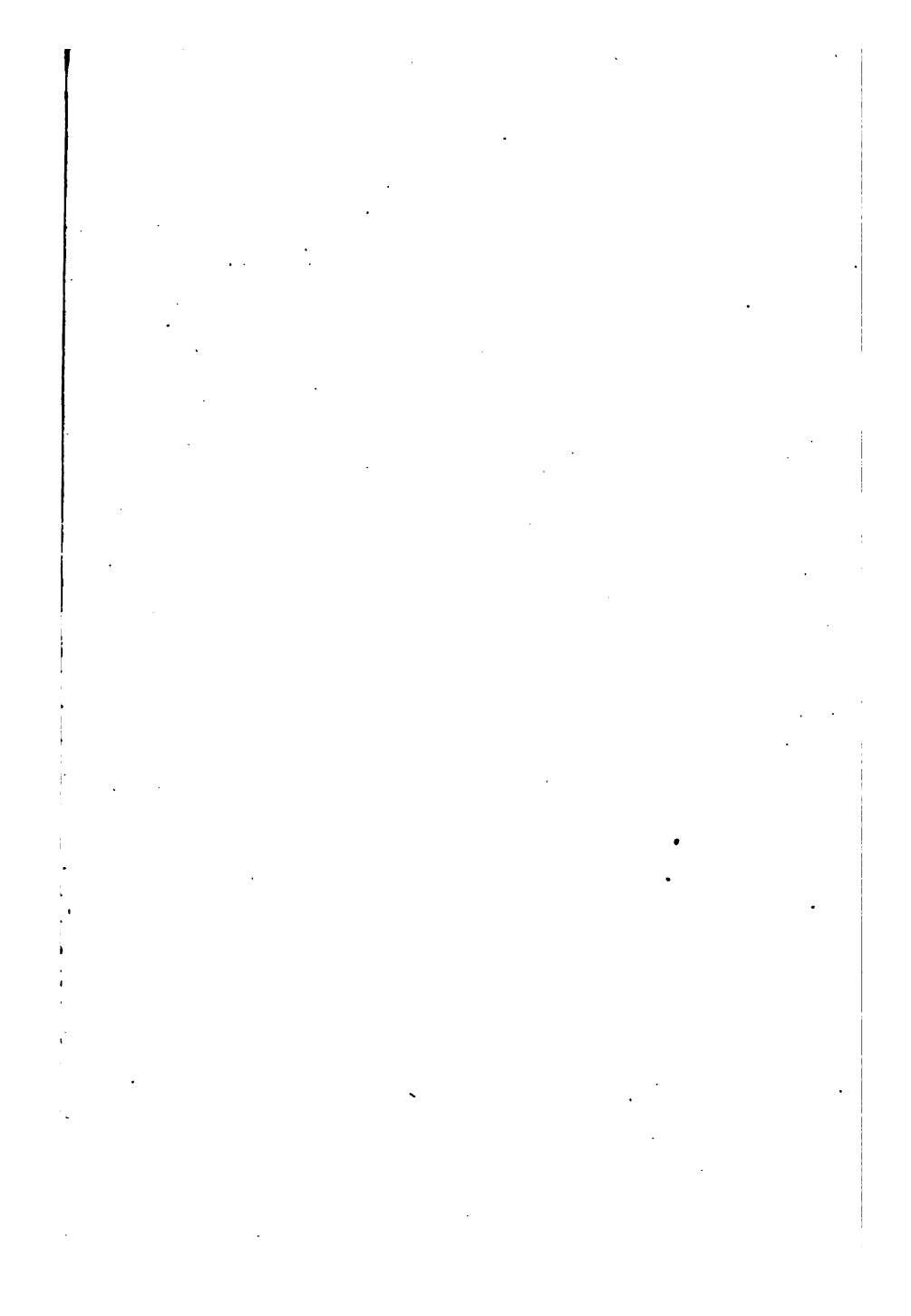
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the 1990s, the number of people with a mental health problem has increased by 50% (Mental Health Foundation 1999). The prevalence of mental health problems has increased in all age groups, but the increase has been most marked in the young (Mental Health Foundation 1999).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the mental health needs of young people (Mental Health Foundation 1999). The National Health Service (NHS) has a responsibility to provide services for young people with mental health problems, but the current funding of mental health services is inadequate to meet the needs of young people (Mental Health Foundation 1999). The NHS is currently spending £1.5 billion on mental health services, but this is only a fraction of the £10 billion that would be required to meet the needs of young people (Mental Health Foundation 1999).

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the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are under 15 years of age is expected to increase from 1.1 billion to 1.5 billion.

As the world's population grows, the demand for food and other resources grows. The world's population is expected to reach 6 billion by the year 2000, and 8 billion by the year 2025. The world's population is expected to be 10 billion by the year 2050. The world's population is expected to be 12 billion by the year 2100.

The world's population is expected to be 14 billion by the year 2150. The world's population is expected to be 16 billion by the year 2200. The world's population is expected to be 18 billion by the year 2250. The world's population is expected to be 20 billion by the year 2300.

The world's population is expected to be 22 billion by the year 2350. The world's population is expected to be 24 billion by the year 2400. The world's population is expected to be 26 billion by the year 2450. The world's population is expected to be 28 billion by the year 2500.

The world's population is expected to be 30 billion by the year 2550. The world's population is expected to be 32 billion by the year 2600. The world's population is expected to be 34 billion by the year 2650. The world's population is expected to be 36 billion by the year 2700.

The world's population is expected to be 38 billion by the year 2750. The world's population is expected to be 40 billion by the year 2800. The world's population is expected to be 42 billion by the year 2850. The world's population is expected to be 44 billion by the year 2900.

The world's population is expected to be 46 billion by the year 2950. The world's population is expected to be 48 billion by the year 3000. The world's population is expected to be 50 billion by the year 3050. The world's population is expected to be 52 billion by the year 3100.

The world's population is expected to be 54 billion by the year 3150. The world's population is expected to be 56 billion by the year 3200. The world's population is expected to be 58 billion by the year 3250. The world's population is expected to be 60 billion by the year 3300.